693 609 682 plaintiff (lord of blood) has the right to name them. Or they may be named by the "bairaktar" (head of the tribe). This is only done if the matter cannot be settled by con-jurors chosen by the plaintiff.

The gjaksur has the right to object to two of the con-jurors, who must be replaced by others. The con-jurors are all men of standing in the tribe ("plect," elders; "kren," heads). They examine the facts and hear the accused ("gjaksur") and decide if peace can be made and on what terms. If all twenty-four agree to take the peace oath with him he is then reckoned innocent, and he and his family do not owe any further blood, but pay blood-gelt to the zoti i gjakut. This varied from about £25 to £50. If they all agree but one, he may be replaced by two others. If still no agreement is come to, the gjaksur may bring more con-jurors, who are members of his family, up to the number of eight.

Agreement having been come to, the whole party goes into the 782 church (or mosque) before which the council has been held. In the 608 church the candles are lighted on the altar, and in the presence of the priest the gjaksur swears his innocence. He no longer owes blood and is, therefore, innocent. Next swear those of his family who may have been summoned, and then all the con-jurors. After this the gjaksur and the zoti i gjakut frequently ratify the peace by swearing blood brotherhood (*v.* Blood Brotherhood).

By Moslems the oath is sworn in the mosque.

693 Each of the con-jurors has to be paid a small fee for his services. The plaintiff in some cases can thus annoy the accused by insisting upon the full number of con-jurors allowed by the law. A priest counts as twelve con-jurors, and sometimes an important elder is reckoned as two.

628 The oath being taken and the blood-gelt paid, the man is free to return to his burnt house and repair it. Being as a rule of solid stone, only the roof and woodwork need renewing. If he is a popular man, other members of the tribe help him both to pay the fine and start life again.

627 682 To Mgr. Miédia, now Archbishop of Scutari, I am indebted for an account of how two families can make peace voluntarily without appeal to the law. Having ascertained by means of emissaries that peace will be acceptable, the gjaksur and his relatives choose a feast day and enter the house of the injured family with their hands bound. A child placed the wrong way round in a cradle is carried with them. If the peace offer is accepted the lord of blood loosens their bonds and puts the child straight in the cradle. The blood-gelt is then arranged and paid. This custom existed among the Dukagini.

682 628 The above all refers to a murder committed by one man. But it may happen that several men all fire at once and kill a man. A search

2: Durham B-5 (ca. 1910)1928 EG1 Albania EG1

much probably valuable material, for when many an ancient grave has been opened and nothing but pottery and bits of bronze or iron found, the treasure-seekers, enraged that the gold should have thus been turned to rubbish because they did not know the formula, have smashed it all into small fragments. 776 777 789

One way to find treasure is to spread a layer of wood-ash over the spot where it is believed to lie. Next morning, if it bears the footprint of any bird or beast—a fox, sheep, etc.—such a creature must be sacrificed upon the spot. A black animal or bird with no touch of white on it is particularly efficacious. 777 782

In many places I had to declare to the headmen that I had not come to search for treasure.

Those good days are past. Albania is now being searched for petroleum, and, unless the kindly earth refuses to give it up, the land will be devoured by foreign speculators.

I was once taken a weary tramp in Berisha to see and explain a marvel. On a great mass of rock was a slight hollow into which a man's hand would fit, and near it a depression that was supposed to be like a mule's hoof-print. Both were natural weatherings of the rock. But the native theory was that ages ago, when the rock was soft, a man had hidden a treasure and made the rock flow over it. He had then marked the spot with his hand and the hoof-mark of his beast. Unless the right formula could be obtained there was nothing for it but to quarry and blast the huge mass, and without the formula even this might not avail. I vainly said the marks meant nothing. My excited escort would not let me leave till I had "written" (i.e. drawn) the marks, and promised that if learned men in England could explain them I would return and show them how to find the treasure. 777 789

"Hoof-marks" are favourite things in the Balkans. One was shown me on the shores of Lake Presba and ascribed to Sharatz, the magic horse of Marko Kralyevitch; and in a cave on the slopes of the Lovchen in Montenegro I was shown, as a great marvel, a small roundish depression—a hoof-mark, also "made when the rock was soft." Krsto thought it possible that Marko Kralyevitch had once stabled Sharatz here, and several people asked my opinion about it. In the long weary hours, when watching goats on the mountains, men ponder over such trifles and build fancies upon them. Weary and weary are those endless hours. I never met anyone who did not speak with hate of the watching of beasts he had had to do when young. Often was I asked to build a factory where a man would be given enough bread for a day's labour and no longer have to watch goats on the mountain. The foreigner is now starting works; I doubt if they bring the expected happiness. [517] 777

In the hill-side on the left of the road from Djakova to Prizren I 772

4: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
EG1 Albania EG1

755 in which he remains seated three days, at the end of which time he is washed with "unspoken-over" water.[1] This, which is also called by an Albanian word signifying "stolen," is water drawn from the well or fountain in silence and carried home without the bearer having spoken, or been spoken to, on the way, and it is believed to possess highly salutary virtues. Into the water some "sweet" or "heavy" leaves are thrown, the number and also the kind being determined by fixed rules according to the nature of the malady. Among the "sweet" leaves are those of the pomegranate, apple, and rose trees, and also, strange to say, of nettles; among the "heavy," those of the laurel, cypress, ivy, and other evergreens. Three days after such an ablution the patient is expected either to recover or to die. Should he be able to indicate the spot on which he received the blow, the earth is there sprinkled with rose-water in order to appease the offended beings, who are said to be extremely fond of this scent; or he there throws down something, the nature of which is known only to himself, in the belief that the malady from which he suffers will be transferred to the being who may chance to tread upon it.

755 754 The effects of the evil eye are also removed by sprinkling the patient with "unspoken-over" water, three nettle stalks being dipped into it for that purpose, and giving him to eat three mulberry buds, the mulberry tree being one of the sovereign antidotes for that much dreaded influence.

755 Rheumatism in the hands or feet is cured by

[1] Such water is also used by the Greeks, who call it νερὸ ἀχράντου.

4: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
EG1 Albania EG1

842 remove the charm. If an Albanian, having lost his first wife, marries a second in what the relatives of the deceased may consider indecent haste, they revenge themselves upon him by pouring water upon the grave of his dead wife, in the belief that this will have the effect of causing his second spouse to be childless.

761 751 Among the Christian Tosks, if two or more children of a family have died in infancy, the next born baby is passed three times through a kind of iron tripod. If yet another child dies, the next baby is placed where four roads meet, a silver cross, for which nine women who bear the name of Maro have given the metal, is laid on its body, and the first passer-by is [608] asked to be godfather or godmother to it.

•782 In some places, the neighbourhood of Dibra, for instance, black sheep are said to be sacrificed by witch-wives for the benefit of sick persons. Similar sacrifices appear to be now substituted for those of human beings, who, in the popular traditions of the Albanians, [491] as in those of other nations, are said to have been formerly buried under the foundations of important buildings;[1] for Von Hahn relates that, during the present century, when a new bridge was about to be built by the Governor-General's orders over the rapid river Arcen, twelve sheep were sacrificed, their heads being buried under the piers, in order that they might be able to withstand the force of the current.

789 731 When swarms of locusts or cockchafers, as some-

[1] See, for instance, the Greek song of "The Bridge of Arta," *Greek Folk-songs*, p. 81; and "The Monastery of Argis" in Alexandri's *Baltadeo de la Roumanie*.

4: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
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times happens, are ravaging the country, a number of women assemble, and, having captured some of the insects, form a mock funeral procession, and, with hair dishevelled, proceed to drown them in the nearest well or stream, singing in turn as they go the following dirge, which is repeated by the others in chorus:

> O locusts! O cockchafers! parents kind,
> Orphaned you have left us all behind!

This ceremony is believed to cause the death of the rest of the destructive swarm.

If one of a herd of cattle dies, its head is buried in the farmyard in order that a similar fate may not befall the rest of the herd. When an ox or cow is ill, "unspoken-over" water is brought and sprinkled over it. If several of the cattle are ailing, and in other cases of a serious nature, the water used is brought from three different wells or springs, and mixed together, its efficacy being believed to be thus increased to a threefold degree.

Very numerous are the ceremonies observed with the object of ensuring good, or averting bad, luck. In Northern Albania, when a youth, or man, is about to leave his home for a distant town a curious ceremony is performed, which is believed to ensure him a safe and successful journey. In front of the house-door the women place a jar filled with "unspoken-over" water, decorated with foliage and hung with earrings of gold and silver. The traveller touches the jar with his foot, takes in his hand the earrings and some of the foliage, and sets out, accompanied for a mile or two by his relatives, to whom, when they finally take

10:Hasluck F-5 (1926-1939)1954 EGl Albania EGl

695 778 Tirana, Sheikh Hasan's at Nangë in Lumë, Sheikh Ibrahim's at Surroj across the river Drin from Nangë, Sheikh Fejza's at Bulqizë, Balim Sulltan's at Martanesh, and those of two abbots at Krujë. Sulejman Pasha and Sheikh Ibrahim lie in an isolated mausoleum, [795] Balim Sulltan in a cave, and the others in monasteries. These saints belonged to different sects; Sulejman Pasha, the soldier who founded Tirana in the seventeenth century, was a Sunni; Sheikh Hasan, founder of the monastery at Nangë, and his brother, Sheikh Ibrahim of Surroj, were Khalvetis; Balim Sulltan of Martanesh and the two abbots of Krujë were Bektashis; and Sheikh Fejza, founder of the monastery at Bulqizë, a dissident Bektashi. Sometimes it did not matter to what sect the buried saint belonged. Sheikh Hasan of Nangë was so renowned that the local population, even if not Khalvetis, took their oaths on his grave and never in the mosque, and Catholic as well as Moslem oath-takers came in serious cases to his grave from Shkodër, four days away. Sulejman Pasha's grave drew oath-takers from as far away as Martanesh; these had long since forgotten his history, and, though ardent Bektashis, did not care that he was a Sunni. Sunni Albanians are not so liberal however; taught to abhor the Bektashis as unorthodox Moslems, they left the graves of Balim Sulltan of Martanesh and the two abbots of Krujë to Bektashi oath-takers. Sheikh Fejza, abhorred by Sunnis as almost a Bektashi and by Bektashis as a backslider from their faith, commanded allegiance only among his own followers in Bulqizë. Oaths used to be taken in three mausolea in the Bektashi monastery at Krujë, but by 1930 the abbot refused to open one for such a purpose. Once, as an oath was being taken in this mausoleum, both disputants fell dead; there had been roguery on both sides as the buried saint was quick to detect. Ever afterwards the abbots restricted oath-takers to the two mausolea in which the saints seemed slower to wrath.

695 782 Among invocations of the Deity used in oaths, the following are recorded: 'By the Lord' (Perlat and Shkrel); 'By this Lord Who gave me life' (Perlat); 'By this Lord Who is in Heaven' (Shalë); 'By Our Lady' (Shkrel); and 'By the Blood of Christ' (Shalë). In all these the influence of the Church is evident, but there are hints in the Albanian originals that some are older than the Church.

The Deity was invoked by Moslems as follows: 'By that Lord' (Godolesh); 'By God' (Dibër); 'By God, with God, from God'[1]

[1] *Vallahi, billahi, tallahi.*

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(Godolesh and Lumë). The first two phrases are evidently old Albanian and have nothing exclusively Moslem about them; the second (lit. 'May I see God') has even a Catholic ring. The third is widely known all over the Moslem world and in certain areas which were once under Moslem rule. But it is used in a magical rather than a religious sense. It is found in magical formulae among the Arabs of Egypt and the Christian Greeks of the island of Zea, next door neighbour to Euboea.[1]

The only invocation of the Deity which the author recorded among the Orthodox was in Shpat and ran as follows: 'By that Christ in Whom we believe.' It is evidently a Church formula.

There was no sign that any of these oaths was preferred to the others; they seemed to have equal value. Readers who know the Catholics and the Orthodox, the two religions which divided Albania before the Turks came in the fifteenth century, will be struck by the paucity of references to Christ and the Virgin Mary and by the emphasis on God; this may be a further indication that the oaths go back to pagan days when neither Christ nor the Virgin was known.

Formulae for invoking Catholic saints were such as 'By that St Nicolas' in Kurbin and 'By the candle of St Nicolas' among the Highlanders of Breg i Matit and Gurrëzë. Both were very grave oaths. The candle in the second is the wax taper lit before pictures of the saint by the devout; oath-takers seem to have feared that perjury would extinguish the flame of their life as easily as a candle could be put out. Of all their saints too, the Catholic Highlanders preferred St Nicolas. No Moslem saints were invoked as such; it was rather by their graves than themselves that oaths were taken. A strange oath, which comes from Surroj, was an exception. This ran 'By this patrón saint of coffee'. Coffee, the peasants of Surroj explained, has a 'very important' patron saint. All over Albania coffee-house keepers make a libation to him every morning by pouring away the first cup of coffee that they make. They hope that after being placated in this way the saint will send them many customers. Some believe that he lies buried somewhere in the east of the Turkish empire, possibly in Arabia.

Catholic priests and Moslem clergymen—hoxhas and sheikhs among the Sunnis, abbots (*baba*, sing.; *baballar*, plur.) among the Bektashis—were respected as men of God, and Bektashi abbots

[1] See *Folklore*, Vol. XXXVII, p. 195 (June 1926).

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695 even became saints at their death, but an oath 'by the priest' or
698 'by that hoxha' was never taken; it would have been regarded as
793 sacrilege.

695 A most interesting oath was taken by both the Orthodox and the
● 792 Moslems of Berat town and district. Its commonest forms were
[776] 'By Him of Tomorr' and 'By the Holy One of Tomorr'. The deity that dwelt in pagan days on the summit of Tomorr, the lofty, beautiful mountain that dominates the town of Berat, is still a living force in the district. He was, indeed, so dreaded that even in conversation he could not be named, but only darkly alluded to. 'By that mountain top' is no less solemn an oath than the more definite pair already given. No man had been known to swear any of them falsely.

[821] By what was perhaps a survival of early nature worship, oath-takers sometimes invoked natural objects as in the oaths, 'By this bright light which is dawning', 'By this evening which is coming', 'By this night we have to-night'. These were all given by Catholics in Perlat. The first two were used for oaths taken in the morning and the third for those taken in the evening. Moslems in Godolesh and Labinot sometimes swore 'By this sun' and 'By this earth'. The latter was a very solemn oath, earth being weighty for two reasons: man was made of it and it lies heavy on a dead man who committed sins such as perjury during his lifetime. Apparently oaths were not taken 'by this fire' or 'by this moon'; perhaps both fire and moon lack the inevitability and stability that fitted dawn and darkness, the sun and the earth, for worship by primitive Albanians.

695 Among oaths by sacred buildings were such as 'By this church'
782 among Catholics and 'By this mosque' among Moslems. They were
778 chiefly employed conversationally, and meant little more than our own expression 'on my honour'. Indeed, a man of Lurë used them indifferently, irrespective of whether he or his hearer were Catholic or Moslem. But when a Moslem of Martanesh swore 'by this holy place' as he stood in Balim Sulltan's mausoleum, his oath was very solemn. So, too, were the oaths in Bulqizë 'by that shrine', the domed tomb of Sheikh Fejza; in Tirana by the grave of Sulejman Pasha, the seventeenth-century founder of the town; in Krujë by the tombs of two Bektashi abbots; in Nangë, Lumë, by the tomb of the Khalveti saint, Sheikh Hasan; and in Surroj, by the grave of Sheikh Hasan's brother, Sheikh Ibrahim. In the last case the formula was rather unusual; standing in the mausoleum (*teqe*) the

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oath-taker began by saying 'May Sheikh Ibrahim cut short my life'. In the other cases he used some vague formula such as 'By this holy place' or 'By this shrine'.

Oaths by smaller sacred objects were all very similar. The formula used in swearing on an altar was in Shalë 'By this altar'; on a church door in the Malësi e Madhe and Kurbin, 'By these things of the Lord'; on a crucifix or gospel in Mirditë, 'By this holy thing of God'; in Kurbin 'By this thing of God'. The more fanatical of the Moslems preferred to swear on the Koran under a Turkish, or rather Arabic, name. Thus 'By this holy book' was liked in Lumë, and 'By this sacred book' everywhere. Others, as in Vinjollë and Zerqan, swore 'By this thing of God', or if in Godolesh, 'By the holy thing of this our God'. The last oath is very close to the oath of Catholic Mirditë on the Gospel, and there is little doubt that this Moslem oath was once Catholic or Orthodox. Indeed, it may have been pagan. The vagueness of their phraseology made the transference from one religion to another easy. A similar vagueness characterizes most of the oaths in this paragraph. Its origin lay in the simple Albanian's idea of respect for a sacred object; he thought that naming a person or thing detracted from the majesty of that person or thing. Besides preserving the efficacy of ancient oaths through later changes of religion, this vagueness also reduced any repugnance which a Catholic or Moslem in a mixed jury might feel at being asked to swear on the holy book of the other's religion. It has even led Catholics of Lurë, when Islam was fast displacing Catholicism, to anticipate the future conversion by swearing the essentially Moslem oath 'By this *hajmali* (sacred book)' on the Christian Gospel.

A curious and most solemn oath among Catholics was 'by the stone'. This was not any ordinary stone that the oath-taker might pick up regardless of his religion, but was a special one found only among Catholics. Triangular in shape, it had a hole in each of its three corners for attaching the balance in which persons minded to offer votive candles to church weighed the wax of which each was to be made. It derived such sanctity from this association with the church that an oath on it was as serious as one on the Gospel or crucifix. Such an oath was in fact reserved for occasions of special gravity, as when a man suspected of a heinous crime was put to the ordeal, or a whole tribe swore to refrain from acts disturbing the public peace, or a community took oath to stick together through

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695 thick and thin. No memory of oath or stone survives in areas such
782 as Çermenikë and Lumë, which abandoned Catholicism some
778 centuries ago.

A number of very solemn oaths were taken on objects that had no obvious association with religion, and these seem to date from the oldest days of Albanian existence. Thus an oath in very common use all over the country was 'By bread'. Among the Catholics where the priests combated everything that they thought was pagan, this oath was more often heard in conversation than in ordeals, but among the Orthodox and Moslems it held a higher place. The most solemn oath of the Orthodox of Shpat was 'By that Christ in Whom we believe and by that bread we eat'. The Moslems generally used a loaf, treating it like a Koran.

Sometimes at least in Martanesh an uncooked maize-cob served instead of a loaf. Both in Martanesh and in Lumë salt was often added; the formula then was in Lumë 'By the bounties of the Lord'.

One advantage of swearing on bread was that the oath could be taken, and peace made as soon as trouble arose. If two men who had met in a house quarrelled, one accusing the other of letting his animals stray into his maize-field or of cutting firewood in his forest or the like, the accused could immediately clear himself, provided two or three other men were present as witnesses; no set jury was necessary. All he had to do was to lay his right hand on bread and say, 'May the bread kill me'. This oath was known in places as far apart as Labinot and Lumë. It has already been said that though a woman could not make oath on the Koran, she might, in Zerqan if accused of petty pilfering, make one on bread. Men in Godolesh, which was an Orthodox village till 1910, sometimes swore 'by this bread' but did not consider it one of their most serious oaths.

695 The reason for choosing bread for such a serious occasion as an
776 ordeal is not certain. The Orthodox oath from Shpat speaks of eating it so that the idea of its being the staff of life seems present. Its conjunction with salt in Lumë and Martanesh supports this idea. On the other hand, the influence of Holy Communion also seems at work. The Orthodox of Albania as of Greece speak of it as the Body of Christ, and on that account consider it sinful to cut rather than break it before beginning to eat. Moslems regard even crumbs of it as too sacred to tread on. Most probably the idea that

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it is the staff of life is the oldest, and religious conceptions come later. As essential to life, it was suited to oath-taking; as shown by the oath 'May the bread kill me', it had power to punish perjury with death.

Two more formulae remain to be mentioned. The first was 'By my head', and the second 'By the head of my son'. The former was thought justifiable; one might do as one pleased with one's own head. But a man who swore on his son's head was strongly disapproved of; only a low fellow, it was thought, would risk his child's life by such an oath. Nothing less was involved, as appears in the following full formula for a land dispute. 'By the head of the son that I have, this land is mine. If it is not mine, may I weep for the son that I have.'[1]

When the time came to take the oath, both Catholics and Moslems behaved as if about to perform an act of worship. Catholics removed their caps and made the oath bareheaded; they also crossed themselves as they began. Sunni Moslems performed the ceremonial ablutions incumbent on them before they pray. By their preliminaries the Catholics sought to indicate respect for the Deity; by theirs the Sunnis sought also to make their oath binding —without them, so they believed, it would be null and void. The Moslems of Martanesh, being Bektashis, did not perform the ceremonial ablutions, but suspect and compurgator when taking the oath in a house had to stand facing Mecca, with the witnesses behind them. As each man's turn came, he advanced towards the Koran or loaf of bread, knelt, and laying hand on the book or bread repeated the prescribed words. This reverence for the sacred emblem was shown by both religions, sometimes with quaint little ceremonies. Thus, when the Catholics of Lurë swore in the open on the Gospel, as was their common practice, they picked up some grass or other greenery and held it over the book while they recited the oath; the purpose of the grass is not clear.[2] After the conversion of Vinjollë to Islam from Catholicism oaths were sworn indifferently, as has already been said, on the Gospel or Koran. When at a house, the sacred book was laid on fresh grass near the house or on a clean place in the farmyard. Each oath-taker kissed it three times, before venturing to put his hand on it and repeat the oath.

[1] The oath on a son's head is common to the Moslem world and if perjured involves the son as well as his father in eternal damnation.

[2] Possibly it involved the false swearer in withering like the plucked grass.

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sent the cousins word to that effect and said he was sending a deputy. When the latter arrived, he found the named cousin ready to take the oath but no boundary stones in place. He refused to witness the oath because Cen's condition had not been observed. The matter was referred back to Cen, who said that since the cousin put to the oath had been unable to take it as enjoined, the other must have the land. If they did not wish to accept this judgement, let them bring him four napoleons each as his fee for the incomplete oath, and let them find another elder and he would pay his expenses; he was no guarantor to make them accept his judgement. The cousins prepared to accept his decision, but when the winner began to plough the land, the loser shot one of his men dead and wounded another; the feud continued for many years.

The oath derived its efficiency as a legal instrument from superstitious fear of punishment for perjury. God, as the Almighty, was naturally the chief agent of this punishment. 'Don't let God catch a perjurer', said the aphorism. In invocations the connexion between oath and Deity was simple. The oath-taker called God or one of His saints to witness to the truth of what he was about to swear, and did so in the full knowledge that if he angered Him by perjury, he must expect a manifestation of Divine wrath. There was a very definite belief that God was watching. In oaths sworn on a sacred object or building, such as 'By this good thing of the Lord', there was an indirect invocation of the Deity, but also while the oath-taker swore, he had to keep his hand on the sacred object—Gospel, crucifix, altar, church door, Koran, saint's grave—just as a witness in an English law court must take the oath with his hand on the Bible. This act established physical contact between the oath-taker and the Deity or saint with which the sacred object or building was associated. To a simple tribesman this was a very solemn thought. On this account these contact oaths were preferred above all others. Probably the contact also made the tribesman think punishment more certain. All over the Near East the principle of direct contact with holy things plays an important role. This is most familiar in cases of sickness, as when people knot rags to sacred graves or trees; the holy influences with which they have thus linked their persons penetrate their whole being and cure their maladies. Many instances will be found in the author's book *Christianity and Islam under the Sultans*. But suppliants for such favours must placate the holy influences with prayers or

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other offerings. If they irritated them, as an oath-taker would do by perjuring himself, they could only expect punishment.

A most interesting example of the working of physical contact which is certainly of pagan origin was found in the Moslem district of Sulovë, south-west of Elbasan. There the most hardened oath-taker dare not forswear himself in a serious case, for he must then take the oath with a coin in his mouth, and perjury would bring him certain death. The coin was clearly Charon's obol, as was the coin slipped on to the chest of Albanian dead in many widely separated areas.

In the exclusively Catholic oath 'by the stone' the solemnity of the oath came from the contact with a holy thing, and punishment for perjury was inflicted in any form that the sacred object chose. When, however, elders swore their equally solemn oath with a stone, log of wood or other weight on their shoulder, or when a man, stone on shoulder, claimed repayment of a dead man's debt, no principle of contact was involved. There was rather a quite crude belief that a perjuring elder would be punished by having to carry the weight for ever and ever in the next world.

God punished the perjurer both in this world and in the next. When the man died, his soul was lost, for being 'heavy-laden before the Lord' it had nowhere to go. If he was an elder who had taken an oath with a stone on his shoulder, he was doomed to carry the stone through all eternity. The first of these terrors was evidently inspired by the Church. The second is an older fear. The elder, when taking the oath, often expressed his willingness to carry the stone in the next world if he perjured himself, but an accused man left his future condition to be inferred, except for the cryptic phrase 'If I did it, may He reward me', which he sometimes inserted in his oath. When he was thinking only of himself he meant, according to the Catholics of Kurbin, 'If I lie may God kill me. If I tell the truth, may He forgive me my sins.' When he contrasted himself with his accuser he meant, 'If I did it may I suffer for it. If I didn't, and you've made me run the risk of taking this oath without due cause, may *you* suffer for it.' This sentence seems to have died out among the Moslems.

Death was the commonest, and most dreaded, form of punishment in this world. In the most solemn oaths it was specified—a son's in the oath by the child's head, the oath-taker's own in the oaths by his own head, with Charon's coin in his mouth, and in

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687 As Father Gjeçov remarks, perjury harmed the soul, imposed a fine and disgraced the man in the eyes of his fellows. All three consequences worked powerfully in their different ways to keep oath-takers on the path of truth. A thief, for instance, might get
[783] as far as the door of a church or mosque, but there his heart would fail him and he would exclaim, 'Forgive me, I did steal it'. Then he would proceed to make the usual reparation. Even innocent men dreaded the oath and took it with great reluctance. In poverty-stricken Theth many were so afraid of it that even when wrongfully accused, they preferred to pay whatever fine was due for the crime.
782 In Lurë people professed to fear nothing so much. 'You may rob
[627] me of my life, but I will not break my oath', they used to say. As
[423] for oaths taken to settle disputes, generations afterwards the descendants of the original disputants were afraid to break the oath of their ancestors. This fear kept boundaries that had been trodden out by an elder under an oath immovable for all time, and preserved water rights. In modern Lurë there is some maldistribution of irrigation water, but no attempt is made to remedy this by force of law. Many years ago, the people say, their ancestors took an oath about the irrigation rights of each family and they dare not violate this oath. One of the derisory stories told in sophisticated Tirana about the Highlanders relates that they were such poor stuff that one said, when brought to court, 'I have sworn a solemn oath not to tell, but press me a little and I will speak'.

There were occasions, however, on which perjury was thought permissible or even commendable. A man of Lumë, when asked to be compurgator in a murder case, would sometimes consider whether he might help to make peace between the parties if he forswore himself. If he decided that 'giving a living man for a dead one was no way of doing', he would swear a false oath. In the Malësi e Madhe, a village ward or a tribe had sometimes to swear not to enter a malefactor's house; when this punishment came to seem excessive it was thought advisable to break the oath.

695 In general, the modern mountaineers drew a distinction between
687 their own old jury system and the law court that was superseding it. Reluctant though they remained to forswear themselves by their old system, they would do so joyfully in the modern court, especially if this saved a friend or relative or concealed their possession of a rifle; this weapon being their chief treasure, they would deny '500 times' on oath that they had it. Instead of public censure

10:Hasluck F-5 (1926-1939)1954 EGl Albania EGl

dependent on charity. At best the elders fixed a sum to be paid by the murderer for leave to work his own land: the money paid, the avenger gave his word not to molest him; or a 'strong' friend guaranteed his safety as he tilled his fields. This arrangement continued until he was killed elsewhere or the avenger consented to make peace.

Various devices were tried to outwit an avenger too venomous to make the smallest concession to his 'imprisoned' enemy. The commonest was for the murderer to let his land to a neutral on the usual Albanian terms of 'halves'. Once some men of Lurë, trusting to the prevailing immunity of women from attack, dressed in their wives' clothes and went out to work. They were soon discovered and compelled to return home. Frequently a woman was made to work alongside the men, the assumption being that from fear of accidentally hitting the women and so disgracing himself the avenger would not fire on the party. The man who murdered the brother of Kodhel Dede of Nezhar in Shpat belonged to a large family, the members of which went to work with a woman between every two men. Kodhel thus found it impossible to kill one of them and after a long period of years made peace. Sometimes a man's wife kept watch while he worked; if she signalled the enemy's approach, he seized his rifle and prepared to defend himself. During Kodhel Dede's feud with the Trepsanishti family he found himself long baulked by the vigilance of his enemy's wife. At last his chance came on the eve of 15 August. The wife had her mind set on making *melata* (sacrificial foods) for distribution on the festival, and, forgetting her husband who was at work on the threshing floor, she went home to make them. Kodhel, who had crept up through a maize field, shot her husband as soon as her back was turned. In the hilly landscape of Fulqet in west Mat a different sort of watch was kept. The 'imprisoned' men, aided by friends, dug a hole on top of a hill commanding a wide view. One of their best shots, rifle in hand, settled down in this hole ready to snipe the avenger if he tried to kill any of the men at work.

Work in the fields apart, an 'imprisoned' murderer might for short periods leave his house under escort of a friend. This friend had to be 'strong', otherwise the murderer might be killed by his enemy, a lasting disgrace to the man whose protégé he was for the time being. Sometimes murderer and avenger had a common friend who took the former out; in that case the friend ran less risk

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771 Thus their practices and beliefs included: building sacrifices,
[782] which at one point were most probably human sacrifices; the faith
[769] in the existence of certain snakes that guarded treasures and in the tutelary spirits of people; exposing the dead after the manner of the Parsi, as a result of that lack of respect for the corpse which springs from the knowldege of the eternity of the spirit--the ancient Thracians were jubilant whenever someone died, and they wailed when some-
[775] one was born--; werewolf conceptions; separation of the soul in sleep; wandering about of the dead, especially of evil people who in the form of a ghost or in a transformed human shape cause harm. The foreseeing of the future makes use of materialistic means in order to survive before the masses in a degenerate age which no longer knows
[787] or believes. It prophesies from the fissures that appear in a heated sheep's shoulder blade or hen's breast bone; also from the bright and dark spots in the light filtering through, or from the flight of birds.
[789] The old knowledge of the emanating, radiating spiritual forces of beings and things is used for magical purposes, for instance little pieces of paper that have something written on them and which are worn as a protection or drunk after they have been dissolved in water. The sun still lives among the Albanians as "God's reflection."

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2:Edmonds T-3 (1926?) 1927 E13 Balkan Peoples
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saint can further their political aims, and, to me, at all events, the matter still remains a mystery.

In addition to the belief in the powers of St. John of Scutari—a belief which has a religious background—the local people hold other beliefs, some of which date back to very remote times. The graves of the babas are accounted holy, and are usually covered with cloths put there by pious persons who need assistance. And at a certain spot in the masonry of the ancient city wall there is a window or aperture at which it is customary for women who are unable to nurse their babies to place offerings of bread. When the wall was originally built, many centuries ago, a woman was sacrificed by being enclosed alive in the masonry at this particular spot. The sacrifice, quite a usual one in those days when any constructional work of importance was begun, was intended to propitiate evil spirits who might interfere with the progress of the work. On this occasion an opening was left, so the story goes, through which the unhappy woman might suckle her baby, and it is on this account that the place is supposed to possess the power of stimulating the flow of natural milk in those who make offerings there.

The tourist, should he penetrate so far, will find much to interest him in Elbasan, especially on market day, when it is packed with country folk in an astonishing variety of costumes. The surroundings are delightful. There are several parks and open spaces of which the most remarkable is a small square to the south of the town surrounded by

set its internal stability. The very act of vengeance is a ritual, as is the constant repetition of the need for vengeance. The rites of blood brotherhood and godfatherhood are rituals performed by Catholic and Moslem alike.

Both Catholics and Moslems believe in a host of malevolent spirits which pay the mountains a seasonal visit in the springtime, and which can sometimes be kept at bay by the use of amulets. These evil spirits are of course the symbols of the general hunger, illness, and irritability which beset the mountaineers at this critical season. Catholics and Moslems alike attribute non-traumatic illnesses to spells cast by magicians, through the agency of hair and nail clippings. Wasting illnesses, such as consumption and cancer, may be attributed to vampires, sucking their victim's blood.

A vampire is said to be a human being, usually but not always a woman, who can change herself into an insect and fly into a room in which her victim is sleeping. As she fills with the blood, she has to leave now and then to spit it out. A person who finds such a gobbet of blood on the path is lucky; he can wrap it up and keep it as an amulet to protect him against vampires—and incidentally probably expose himself and his family to tuberculosis.

When people are hungry and ill, it is easy to suspect others of evil magic. The person named as a witch or vampire will of course be someone whose actions are eccentric or mysterious, who is a cause of disturbance in the community, and whose loss will not be greatly felt. If a child is suffering from malnutrition its parents may accuse some old woman, and drag her from her house. They will accuse her of having sucked blood from the child, and force her to spit in the child's mouth. Under protest she may spit merely in order to get away. If the child recovers, then the parents are sure she is a vampire; if the child dies she was innocent for her spittle did not cure it. People do not like being accused of witchcraft, or of having their aged grandmothers hauled off for trial; such actions, like the very suspicion itself, may result in bloodshed.

The Ghegs are great oath-swearers. Between blood feuds rivals will swear to keep the peace, on a stone in the presence of the

782 elders. Even if they are persuaded to swear on the cross, they will not forego the stone, which is the symbol which gives their oath
787 validity. They are also great believers in omens, and in divination. Men versed in this skill read the future by observing the sternal bones of fowl and the scapulae of sheep. I have witnessed a performance of the latter. The bone has its special divisions, each of which has meaning. On the sheep's scapula the joint socket is the house, and its depth or shallowness indicates whether the house will be empty or full of wealth. This can be used to predict success or failure of crops. The ridge on the blade shows whether or not flocks will multiply. Small holes on the blade are cradles, and the diviner can tell how close to the family, i.e., the "house," the birth will be by the distance from the socket. When you hold the blade up to the firelight or lamp, the shape and position of the marrow will tell where and when there will be fighting. Opaque white spots mean death, and their position indicates whether they will be within or without the household of the enquirer.

182 All of these rituals are concerned with the
783 maintenance of equilibrium in Gheg society. Oaths give authority to agreements, and cannot be broken until a crisis arrives which is stronger than that which the oath-breaking will produce. By clever use of the divining bones, a knowledgeable man can evaluate the state of affairs in his neighborhood, and give warnings; he can also precipitate decisions from wavering allies, for if he is a diviner of reputation, his words will be believed. Very often what he predicts will come true.

Special ritual routines common to members of both official religions restore equilibrium after the crises of birth, marriage, and death. All of these rituals which reinforce their social habits are of much greater importance to the Ghegs than the rites of church or mosque, which are not as well adjusted to this particular form of society. Another such mechanism
671 is traditional law, codified and memorized as the Law of Lek Dukagin, which expresses the mountain attitude toward marriage and the selection of wives, and toward the blood feud. It serves to crystallize forms of behavior and inhibit change in those who are trained from childhood to believe in its infallible authority.

[See ext 116, pp. 37a-b - And 45+]